

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I move that the Senate stand in recess until the hour of 1 p.m. today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 11:12 a.m., recessed until the hour of 1 p.m.; whereupon, the Senate reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer [Mr. STEVENS].

QUORUM CALL

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. STEVENS). In my capacity as a Senator from Alaska, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

Mr. BRYAN. Objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KYL). Objection is heard.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk resumed the call of the roll, and the following Senators answered to their names:

Bryan	Inouye	Nickles
Coats	Kempthorne	Reid
Conrad	Kyl	Santorum
Craig	Lott	Stevens
Daschle	Mack	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. A quorum is not present.

Mr. LOTT addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The distinguished majority leader.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I move to instruct the Sergeant at Arms to request the presence of absent Senators.

Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is agreeing to the motion. The yeas and nays have been ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. NICKLES. I announce that the Senator from Rhode Island [Mr. CHAFEE] and the Senator from Vermont [Mr. JEFFORDS] are necessarily absent.

Mr. FORD. I announce that the Senator from Vermont [Mr. LEAHY], the Senator from Illinois [Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN], and the Senator from Washington [Mrs. MURRAY] are necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 93, nays 2, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 192 Leg.]

YEAS—93

Abraham	Feinstein	Lott
Akaka	Ford	Lugar
Ashcroft	Frahm	Mack
Baucus	Frist	McConnell
Biden	Glenn	Mikulski
Bingaman	Gorton	Moynihan
Bond	Graham	Murkowski
Boxer	Gramm	Nickles
Bradley	Grams	Nunn
Breaux	Grassley	Pell
Brown	Gregg	Pressler
Bryan	Harkin	Pryor
Bumpers	Hatch	Reid
Burns	Hatfield	Robb
Byrd	Heflin	Rockefeller
Campbell	Helms	Roth
Coats	Hollings	Santorum
Cochran	Hutchison	Sarbanes
Cohen	Inhofe	Shelby
Conrad	Inouye	Simon
Coverdell	Johnston	Simpson
Craig	Kassebaum	Smith
D'Amato	Kempthorne	Snowe
Daschle	Kennedy	Specter
DeWine	Kerry	Stevens
Dodd	Kerry	Thomas
Domenici	Kohl	Thompson
Dorgan	Kyl	Thurmond
Exon	Lautenberg	Warner
Faircloth	Levin	Wellstone
Feingold	Lieberman	Wyden

NAYS—2

Bennett

McCain

NOT VOTING—5

Chafee
Jeffords

Leahy
Moseley-Braun
Murray

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. A quorum is present.

The distinguished majority leader is recognized.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I begin by pointing out that in order to come off of a quorum call I had to use this procedure of instructing the Sergeant at Arms to get the presence of the Members here. It is the first time I ever had to do that as majority leader, and I do not like to do it. I remember grumbling loudly when it was done by a former majority leader. In fact, I usually voted no because I hated the procedure. However, I had no alternative, because I was trying to come off of a quorum call so we could have some discussion about the situation we find ourselves in. That exercise is reflective of why we are in this situation right now.

Apparently, Mr. President, there is a planned concerted effort to have gridlock in the U.S. Senate. We need to do the people's business. I am committed to that. I still think that the best thing to do for ourselves politically is to do what is right for the country, and for us to be locked down and not able to move any legislation after the exercise we went through to vote on the small business tax relief package and the minimum wage, to sort of clear the decks and move on to other issues, and now I find that instead of gridlock being broken it is beginning to get worse every day.

Mr. President, we have now in this Congress had to file 73 cloture motions, I presume probably the largest in history. There were 40 in the 102d Congress, 51 in the 103d Congress, and al-

ready 73 in the 104th Congress. Now, I am new in this position. I am trying mightily to do a good job by finding a way to produce, finding a way for the Senate to act, while honoring the needs of 100 Senators. It is not easy. It is very hard. It takes cooperation. It takes communication. I have been doing that. I tried to talk to my colleagues, one by one, small groups, repeated meetings, and I tried doing it across the aisle.

I say, honestly, I found the Democratic leader open and helpful in many instances, and I tried to work with others. Senator PRYOR from Arkansas has a bill that he has been working on for years. He started this whole effort of having the taxpayer bill of rights. For heaven's sakes, we ought to have that. The taxpayers ought to have some rights when it comes to dealing with the Internal Revenue Service. Yet we have not been able to get that bill cleared. Why? I do not understand.

As soon as I was elected to this position I said, "Look, enough on this Federal Reserve Board holdup. Let the Senators talk. Decide on a time, have our say, and vote." They are the President's nominees. We may not like them. I did not like all of them. I voted against one of them. Some of you voted against one of them, maybe somebody voted against two of them, but we agreed on a time with the distinguished majority leader and those that had problems—the Senator from Iowa had held up these nominees from his own administration for weeks. I said, "Enough. Give them the time, talk about it, vote, and go on."

Small business tax relief and minimum wage have been sitting in our lap for weeks, months, balling up everything. I could have been willing to just continue it that way because I did not like the way it was set up, but it would have wound up tying up the small business tax relief, minimum wage, taxpayers bill of rights, the Billy Dale White House travel issue, and I do not know whatever else was balled up in the Gordian knot. I said for the good of the Senate, for Democrats and Republicans, and some of my colleagues did not like my concerted, aggressive continuous effort to find a way to resolve that issue, but I stayed with it and I stayed with it. The Democratic leader and I have worked, and we ran into little problems. Sometimes he misunderstood what I said. Sometimes I could not carry out what I thought I could. Sometimes he could not. We had to rework it, but we did it. We set up a process to do it.

Regular order. I remember Senator Mitchell saying what we need to do is the regular order. There is a way you do things around here. You bring up a bill reported by a committee, have debate, offer amendments, you vote and win or lose, and you move on, and then it goes to conference.

Now, on both sides we are beginning to block appointments of conferees. This is a relatively new device—not unprecedented, but are we going to start

doing it on every bill? I do not like it. We ought to go to conference on Coast Guard authorization of conferees. Finally, we did it today after being held up for, gee, 2 months.

I am going to try to go to appointment of conferees on health care. For 80 days, it has been held up to appoint conferees on the health care bill—80 days—while we have had these running negotiations. There have been complaints that, "Well, gee, we are not in on the discussions." How about regular order? How about we appoint conferees, make sure it is a fair appointment, and go to conference.

I want to tell you who I recommend that we appoint on the health care conference: Senator KASSEBAUM. You know of her work in this area. She has been very diligent. She voted against putting the medical savings accounts in the bill when it was on the floor of the Senate. She has said, standing right there, that she thinks what I have been working on and what we are trying to do is eminently fair and reasonable, and we ought to go with the medical savings account compromise we have worked out. She wants to move this legislation. Senator ROTH, Senator KENNEDY, Senator MOYNIHAN, and myself, Senator LOTT. There are five Senators that are about as equally balanced as you could possibly get and allow the majority party to have a one-vote edge with one of the Senators in the majority certainly committed to getting the job done and certainly unbiased in what she wants to do and how it is achieved.

So we worked through that agreement and carried it out this week. I said Tuesday that, sundown Wednesday, we are back to business. Minimum wage, voted on. Small business tax relief, voted on. Finance Committee improvements in the small business area, accepted. TEAM Act, voted on. Right to work, cloture motion, voted on. The decks are clear and ready to go.

Appropriations bills. DOD, Department of Defense appropriations bill. Do we need it? Is it the right thing for the country? Have we already debated everything that is in it? Yes. The authorization bill. We spent 2 weeks on that. Then, with a little cooperation at the end, we concluded it and voted on it this week. That was clear. We have two of the most effective managers of legislation in the Congress wanting to handle this bill. Senator STEVENS from Alaska and Senator INOUE from Hawaii are ready to go. The truth of the matter is that if they had 40 minutes, they could probably finish it. They want to go to work. And then it is blocked—blocked before an effort was even made on nuclear waste.

Yesterday, we thought everything was all ready to go on the Department of Defense appropriations. I am in my office and, all of a sudden, we are talking about nuclear waste, not on DOD. We blew 4 hours or more yesterday when we could have probably completed the Department of Defense ap-

propriations bill. But, again, in an abundance of wanting to be fair, I understand how important this is to the Senators from Nevada. I am sympathetic to how they feel. But I am more sympathetic to doing the job and doing what is right for all of America.

What about the Senators from Minnesota, who have nuclear waste piling up in their State to the limit, sitting out in cooling pools? If you want to talk about the environment, this is the most dangerous issue in this country—nuclear waste, sitting in open pools in Minnesota, in Vermont, in Idaho, in South Carolina, North Carolina. It is all over America. What about the other 48 Senators that are directly involved in this nuclear waste issue and the States that are involved—sorry to get carried away there. It is dangerous to be sitting here. This is worse than nuclear waste.

I want to do it for the country's sake. Britain, France, Sweden, and Japan have stepped up and addressed the issue of nuclear waste. Yet, we cannot bring ourselves to deal with this. It is not easy. Transportation is a problem. Temporary storage and permanent storage. It has to go somewhere. Nobody wants it. Nevada does not want it, nobody wants it.

But there are safe ways we can do this. It is the right thing to do. It is right for the country. Now we found that not only did it delay us last night—I thought we did the right thing to let the Senators talk and express their concerns; they were entitled to that. But they agreed that we would close it up about 6 o'clock last night, and they agreed that we would come back at 10 o'clock and we would be on the Department of Defense appropriations bill. Lo and behold, I had a cup of coffee, and I woke up and, gee, we are back on nuclear waste again.

Now, I am trying my best, but for America's sake, I need some help on both sides of this aisle so that we can move this legislation. I set up campaign finance reform. I did not agree with it, did not like it, did not want to waste the time of the Senate on it. I admit that. But we set up a fair and agreed-to process that Senator MCCAIN of Arizona agreed to, Senator MCCONNELL agreed to, and Senator FEINGOLD, and others, agreed to. We took it up, debated it, and we voted. Regular order.

On judges. You know, I do not like to not move appointments that are not controversial. So I tried it. I tried four. It was objected to by a Democrat because his judge was not on the list of four. So we worked on it and came back and said, "Let us do the four and we will keep going." It was objected to by a Senator. He said, "My judge is not on the list." I said, "OK, I will work on that." I put a lot of time and effort into it. I came back and said, "How about 10?" Then there was objection to one of those that we worked out later on. So we took one off and said, "Here are nine; how about nine?" That was

objected to because there were, I guess, seven that were not on the list with the nine. So if their judge was not on the list, they objected. So we could not move nine. I said, "Well, OK, I could not get four, could not get 10, and could not get nine. How about one at a time?"

I even, at the request of the Democratic leader—and I thought it was a reasonable request—I gave him the list of the order for the next 2 weeks. We talked about it, and I told him I would keep working on it.

I am not interested in balling these things up. I am interested in moving this place. So we lined up nine. When I brought the first one up the day before yesterday, bam, objection again. But, overnight, some additional consideration was given to it. Yesterday, we moved two. Yea, two. Two judges. Wonderful. I would like to do another one today and another tomorrow.

My point in all of this is to say that I am trying. But now we find that the Department of Defense appropriations bill is being held up. The nuclear waste issue, which I was not going to bring up until Friday, lay down cloture, and vote on next Tuesday to see where we were—and not a lot of cloture motions win around here. But now I had to file a cloture motion on nuclear waste.

Health insurance conferees—80 days it has been held up.

Taxpayer bill of rights—I mentioned that. I cannot imagine that anybody is going to stand up and admit they object to bringing this thing up.

White House Travel Office—we have had our fun with that. We have; you have. Nobody in the end when we get to a vote is going to pass it 98 to 2 or 100 to 0. Why not do that?

Gambling Impact Study Commission—I do not particularly like it. I do not like national commissions. I do not like subpoena powers. My State is not particularly happy about it. But some are. A lot of people feel gambling is a problem in this country.

So I said, Look, it is supported by the distinguished Senators, like the Senator from Illinois, Senator SIMON, a highly respected Senator; Senator LUGAR from Indiana; Mr. COATS; Congressman FRANK WOLF. I was not going to stand in the way of bringing that up. I could not. So I want to schedule it. I said let us bring it up, get UC, and move on. I was told, "Well, you know, we will probably have objection to that. Maybe we can work that out." I am ready.

The stalking bill—here is a bill that one night had been cleared, and all day. At the last minute, bam, it got stopped. I never did quite figure out what the problem was with bringing up a bill that would have some limit, some controls, on stalking of people and women and children. But I understand there is a little tete-a-tete thing going on. I am willing to meet with the Senators involved and work that out. But nobody in here is opposed to this stalking bill; not any of us.

So I am just beginning now to wonder what is going on here. We need to work together. We need to move these bills.

We need to move to the foreign ops appropriations bill. We need to do it tonight. Next week we need to do the legislative appropriations bill.

Treasury-Postal Service—we have work to do, and we are completely balled up. This is wrong.

So I have a series of unanimous-consent requests that I want to go through here now. I want to say up front to the distinguished leader that this will not necessarily be the end of it for you or us. Maybe we can work some of them out. I am ready. But as of right now we are completely balled up, and it is not my fault.

I want us all to sober up here now and get on with the business of the Senate.

With that—and he has been very patient—I am glad to yield to the Senator from South Dakota who I know would like to help.

But we have to do it now. We cannot just keep talking about it.

I am beginning to feel like Charlie Brown. I keep running up to kick the football, and it “ain’t” there. I have tried one time, two times, and three times on the judges. I thought it was your ball. You know because it kept disappearing into your cloakroom.

Let us quit this stuff.

I would be glad to yield.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, now the majority leader knows why they pay him much more now.

Mr. LOTT. They do? (Laughter.)

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I am delighted that he has taken the speech that I put in his desk from George Mitchell from about 2 years ago and used it almost verbatim. Obviously, as leaders, we face these frustrations with some frequency. I have learned that now myself over the last 18 months.

I say to the distinguished majority leader that there are many things that he has done since he has taken this office that many of us have found to be very productive, and we appreciate his willingness to cooperate on so many things in the short time that he has been majority leader. I have been asked almost daily by members of the media how I view the first few weeks of the majority leader's tenure, and I have given him very high marks because of his determination to continue to find ways to deal with the many issues that he has listed.

There have been times in this Congress when we have been able to accomplish a number of things. We passed the unfunded mandates bill last year. We passed the line-item veto. We passed the congressional accountability legislation. We passed telecommunications reform. We passed in the Senate a couple of bills that may or may not ultimately become law, including welfare reform. We might be able to do that again.

On those occasions where Democrats and Republicans have worked together,

we have had overwhelming votes. Just this week we passed the minimum wage bill by an overwhelming vote in part because the leadership has been able to find ways to work together.

The majority leader made a point that he has had to file—he used the words “had to file”—a number of cloture motions. I must tell you that I do not know why he and his predecessor have felt compelled so often to file cloture motions on the very day they lay a bill down.

How many times have we seen bills laid down and cloture motions filed on the very first day? What kind of a message for bipartisanship does that send? How many opportunities are we going to have to participate in the legislative process when that happens?

I would like to go through that list of all of those bills and find out how many times on the first or second day a cloture motion was filed. That is not the way we used to do business around here. I hope we can get back to the good old days when we legislated.

He mentioned conferences. He mentioned the fact that we have been reluctant to go to conference. There is one very simple reason for that. We have been unable to go to conference because we do not know they exist once we agree to them. There have been occasions—I cannot tell you how many—when we have agreed to go to conference, then discover that House and Senate Republicans find some room to meet and agree, and then they tell the other Democratic conferees what they have agreed to. That is the conference. We're not even told about it until it's over.

Mr. President, that is not the way to legislate. In the good old days it took Democrats and Republicans to make a conference.

The majority leader has at least expressed a desire to see more bipartisanship in conferences. I am very hopeful that happens because once it does, we will be in a much better position to agree to go to conference.

Talk about kicking the ball. How about when you feel like you are the ball? [Laughter.]

That is really what we are talking about here. It is not a question of where the ball is. The ball is here, and we are getting kicked. [Laughter.]

It is not a very advantageous position for us to be in.

Let me talk briefly about the health care reform conference. The majority leader says conferees have been blocked for 80 days. Maybe it has been so long that the majority leader has forgotten what happened 80 days ago. Eighty days ago, the Senate voted on MSA's. The Senate voted not to include MSA's in this portability bill. Why? Because we all agreed we wanted to keep our eye on the ball, so to speak. [Laughter.]

We wanted to be able to say, “Look, we know that if expand this bill to include other kinds of things, nothing will get done.” I had my own list of

thing I wish could have been added. In fact, one of the toughest votes I have had to cast in a long time was against the measure offered by the Senator from New Mexico and the Senator from Minnesota on mental health. I did not want to vote against that. But I can recall so vividly the distinguished chair of the Labor Committee and the distinguished ranking member saying, “Our plan is to oppose all amendments regardless of how good they may be because we know that, if this bill gets loaded up, nothing is going to get done.”

I do not know how much more visionary they could have been. How prophetic it was, because that is exactly what has happened. Eighty days later, the bill languishes. Do you know what we are hung up on? We are hung up on the insistence of the minority that the majority accept its position and make sure it prevails in the conference. That is really what we are talking about here.

They want to put MSA's back in the bill. We said, “We are prepared to put MSA's back in the bill. But let us simply test it first. We have been debating about whether we can figure out a way to have a test that meets with both sides' satisfaction. But why should we agree to go to conference with the likelihood that we would not even be in the room, based on past performance? That has happened, and it is likely to happen again, given the makeup of the committees.”

Now the leader has come up with a new MSA formula, and it is certainly encouraging. But I am guessing that the Senate conferee will still be in favor of MSA's.

In fact, I am sure that will be the conference position under the plan proposed by the majority leader. So if the Senate is on record in opposition to MSA's, again, it seems to me we feel like we are the football, and we're getting kicked again. We are just not going to do it.

If we can work out a way to ensure that we can reach an agreement in a bipartisan fashion, I am all for it.

The last thing—the majority leader talked about the taxpayer bill of rights. Well, we may have amendments to the taxpayer bill of rights; that's a matter we have been unable to work out up until today. As a result of our negotiations, I think we can now work out our differences.

He talked about the White House Travel Office. Again, we have amendments. We would like to be able to work out an arrangement that would allow these amendments to be taken up.

The majority leader mentioned that he still cannot get the Gambling Impact Study Commission done. I want the RECORD to show that this is the first request we have ever seen to clear the Gambling Impact Study Commission.

The distinguished majority leader mentioned the stalking bill. The distinguished Senator from New Jersey

[Mr. LAUTENBERG], proposed an amendment to the stalking bill weeks ago. Republicans have that amendment for weeks. The reason the stalking bill does not come up—because they do not want that amendment added to this bill.

So that is the issue, Mr. President. We can deal with any one of these bills. But it has to be in a bipartisan way.

That is all we are hoping we can do. We will continue to work with the majority leader to make his tenure as majority leader less frustrating and more productive. And I stand here ready to do it this afternoon.

I yield the floor.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I do feel a need to respond to some of the Democrat leader's comments. First of all, after you pass a bill, you do not take that proverbial ball we have been talking about and go home. You go to conference. That is the way you do business around here.

Now, with regard to these cloture motions, about how we file them on the first day that a bill is brought up, I learned that from Senator Mitchell. He did it all the time.

So I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD, Mr. President, an analysis of what has happened with regard to these cloture motions.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

CLOTURE COMPARISONS BETWEEN THE 103D AND 104TH CONGRESSES

	103d	104th
Number of legislative items having cloture filed against them	20.0	28.0
Of those cloture petitions, number filed on same day as legislative item is first laid before the Senate (or motion to proceed is made)	12.0	15.0
The average number of days of consideration of the remaining legislative items prior to a cloture petition being filed	4.6	4.6

Conclusion: The Republican majority filed 54 percent of their cloture petitions on the first day a measure was considered (or first motion to proceed made).

The Democrat majority filed 60 percent of their cloture petitions on the first day.

Mr. LOTT. On this, it does compare cloture motions between the 103d and 104th Congress. The number of legislative items having cloture filed against them in the 103d, 20, and 104th, 28. Of those cloture motions, the number filed on the same day as a legislative item is first laid before the Senate or motion to proceed is made, 12 in the 103d, and 15 in the 104th.

When I actually got a comparison here of first-day filings by the Republican majority, I find it is 54 percent of their cloture motions on the first day a measure was considered, the Democratic majority filed 60 percent of their cloture motions on the first day.

So maybe we all need to do a little work on that. But our record is not any worse—in fact, it is better—than the one we found from the previous Congress when I believe Democrats were in charge.

Mr. DASCHLE. On that point, if the majority leader will yield briefly, there

are three categories: Amendable vehicles, motions to proceed, and conference reports.

Now, on the motions to proceed and conference reports, we will compare notes here, but let us look at amendable vehicles and see what the record is between Democrats and Republicans. I would like to put that in the RECORD.

Mr. LOTT. My only point is we did not invent this procedure, and we have not been any worse percentagewise than our predecessors.

Now, the next point, talking about how we have worked together, on occasion we have, but let us take the unfunded mandates. I remember that one very well. I remember how long it took us at the beginning of last year to pass a very popular bill that there should not have been any problem with. It took us 3 weeks—3 weeks—to get the unfunded mandates bill through here and then it passed 86 to 10—86 to 10.

Now, with regard to the conferences, I do not know what you are so horrified about that maybe Republicans talk to each other when there is a conference going on. I remember a crime bill on which Senator SIMPSON from Wyoming was working. I remember some sort of conference the Democrats had excluded Republicans on a Sunday afternoon. I remember that. We did not invent that procedure either.

But let me point this out. On three major issues that we have passed this year and sent to the President—I was involved at the direction of Senator Dole in trying to help move those conferences—line-item veto, bipartisan effort; telecommunications, bipartisan effort—Senator HOLLINGS, Senator PRESSLER, Senator MCCAIN, we were all there, bipartisan. I remember it. And again I did not like a lot of what was going on but Democrats were in that room when that final deal was made; small business regulatory relief. This Congress ought to be embarrassed that we have not passed a big regulatory reform package. Fifty-eight Senators voted for that, and yet it languishes in the Senate because we cannot get 60 votes once again for cloture. But we did in a bipartisan way pass small business regulatory reform.

On the health care issue, the vote in the Senate, I remind my colleagues, was a very close one, 52 to 46. And if the vote were held today in the Senate on the experiment proposal that we have offered, it would pass, I would be willing to bet you, overwhelmingly. And by the way, the President has accepted the concept of a broad-based experiment for medical savings accounts. Now, you might argue over the word "broad," but we are not talking about 2,000 or 10,000. You are talking about several hundreds of thousands would be involved in this medical savings account experiment.

My colleagues, we have won. The American people have won. Why do we not declare victory? We have said we will go with an experiment. You have said the President has said, "I will accept it." What is the problem?

I know, there are a lot of details that need to be ironed out; you have to understand every little word, exactly how the deductibles will be determined, and when would there be a vote, and how would there be a vote to extend it, sunset it or whatever. You know where you work those out? Not running up and down the hall out here and your office or my office. You work it out in a conference. We can negotiate, go back and forth with the Senator from Massachusetts until the cows come home, but sooner or later we have to go to conference and work it out.

Now, talk about compromise. I wish this bill had medical malpractice in it. But the conferees have already agreed, the House has agreed to recede, take that out. We want it. I want it. But we want legitimate portability, ability to carry your insurance between jobs. We want an opportunity to deal with pre-existing illnesses. We think it is important that the self-employed be able to deduct more of the costs of their health insurance premiums. But compromise is under way.

The so-called MEWA's—a Washington word, but the ability of small businesses to form pools to give coverage to their workers, I do not understand—I will never understand—why the Federal Government should be telling small businesses you cannot form pools to provide coverage to your workers. In these fast food restaurants, the majority of the workers cannot get and the employers cannot provide health coverage. But if they could form a pool with the restaurant association or the National Federation of Independent Businesses, they could get it. But that was dropped in an effort to show good faith and compromise. We have bent over backwards, I have bent over backwards to try to be reasonable in coming to a compromise, and we are close enough we ought to go to conference with a fair group of conferees and get the job done.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT REQUEST— S. 1894

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that during the pendency of S. 1894, the Department of Defense appropriations bill, it be considered under the following restraints: 1 hour on the bill to be equally divided in the usual form, 1 hour on all first-degree amendments which must be relevant, 30 minutes on all relevant second-degree amendments.

I further ask unanimous consent that any rollcall votes ordered with respect to the DOD appropriations bill on Friday, July 12, and Monday, July 15, occur beginning at 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday, July 16, and that following the disposition of all amendments, S. 1894 be read for a third time, the Senate proceed immediately to H.R. 3610, the House companion bill, all after the enacting clause be stricken, the text of S. 1894, as amended, be inserted and H.R. 3610 be read for a third time and final